

# **PAINÉ AND PREJUDICE: RHETORICAL LEADERSHIP THROUGH PERCEPTUAL FRAMING IN *COMMON SENSE***

DAVID C. HOFFMAN

*This essay reviews the established case for the pivotal role played by Thomas Paine's pamphlet Common Sense in the American Revolution as well as the various explanations that have been proffered to account for its success: the time and place of its publication, Paine's style, Paine's ethos, and his use of psychology and ideology. To these accounts it adds the suggestion that Paine used the term "prejudice" to frame his readers' positive perception of monarchy and the British constitution, and negative perceptions of American independence, as distortions imposed by "habit and custom." In the process of making this case it explores the genealogy of the term "prejudice."*

It is well known, that in July of 1775, a separation from Great-Britain and the establishment of a republican government had never entered into any person's head.

Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*<sup>1</sup>

Lest this declaration should disquiet the minds of our friends and fellow subjects in any part of the empire, we assure them that we mean not to dissolve that union which has so long and so happily subsisted between us.

"Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms,"

signed by Continental Congress July 6, 1775<sup>2</sup>

*David C. Hoffman is Assistant Professor in the School for Public Affairs, Baruch College, City University of New York. This work was supported by a grant from the City University of New York PSC-CUNY Research Program Award. He would like to thank Herbert W. Simons for the early inspiration that led to this and other essays, and David S. Birdsell and the Rhetoric & Public Affairs reviewers for their comments on drafts.*

In the five months between the end of 1775 and July 4, 1776, one of the most dramatic and significant shifts of opinion in American political history took place. As Jefferson attests, the Revolutionary War in its early stages was neither a war for independence nor for the establishment of a republican government. Although hostilities had commenced in April 1775 as British troops clashed with American forces at Lexington and Concord, and George Washington had been elected commander of the army in June, popular opinion, along with a solid majority in Congress, remained opposed to independence through the end of 1775. As the "Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms" makes clear, the colonies at first conceived the object of their armed resistance to be the restoration of their rights as British subjects. The conciliatory language of the "Declaration" of July 6, 1775, quoted above, was followed by the even more conciliatory "Olive Branch Petition" of July 8, 1775.<sup>3</sup> Many interests in the mid-Atlantic colonies were so strongly opposed to independence that in November 1775 the assemblies of Pennsylvania and New Jersey instructed their delegates to the Continental Congress to reject any move toward independence. Maryland followed suit in January 1776.<sup>4</sup> Yet by July 1776 the Continental Congress, following a massive shift of popular opinion, completely reversed itself and declared the united colonies "free and independent states."

Remarkably, one man alone was ostensibly the efficient cause of this sea change of opinion: Thomas Paine. Most of the leaders of the Revolution, and the majority of modern scholars, point to Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* as the work that played the pivotal role in winning over the American people to the idea of independence.<sup>5</sup> Paine can fittingly be called one of the rhetorical leaders of the American Revolution.

In this essay I will contend that one important, and hitherto unnoted, way in which Paine's rhetorical leadership was exercised was by using the term "prejudice" to frame negative perceptions of American independence and positive perceptions of the British constitution as being distorted by the force of custom and habit. In making these arguments I hope to (1) contribute to the ongoing conversation about how *Common Sense* succeeded so dramatically, and (2) explore the relationship between "perceptual framing" and rhetorical leadership. The essay is divided into three major sections. The first section reviews the historical context of *Common Sense* as well as the case that it was an important text in the progress of the American Revolution. The second section reviews various scholarly attempts to explain how and why *Common Sense* was a success. The third section proposes that Paine's use of "prejudice" as a "perceptual frame" contributed to the success of *Common Sense*.

## THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND IMPACT OF *COMMON SENSE*

Although Thomas Paine is often regarded as something of a forgotten founding father, there are a fair number of biographies, collected editions of his work, and critical studies of his thought and writing.<sup>6</sup> Historians and biographers tell the story of an improbable intellectual who escaped an English backwater with a self-confidence that was profound, stubborn, and, although founded in genuine talent, ultimately tragic. The paradoxical Mr. Paine was a failure at business who succeeded in mass persuasion, a deist who spoke to the soul of Puritan America, and a scientist who won fame as a literary stylist.

Paine came to America only 14 months before the publication of *Common Sense*. He left behind him in England a life distinguished only by the intensity of his earnest but unsuccessful attempts to improve his humble lot. He had been born in 1737, the only child of a Quaker corset-maker, in the small town of Thetford. In the 37 years he spent in England before coming to America he had been a hand on a privateer, an excise tax collector, a lobbyist for excise tax collectors, and a grocer. But Paine's every venture had ultimately failed. He arrived in Philadelphia in November 1774, delirious from typhus and with few resources beyond a letter of introduction from Benjamin Franklin and a vague ambition to open a finishing school for young ladies. In short order he secured a position as editor of Robert Aiken's *Pennsylvania Magazine*, a task at which he excelled. Not satisfied with this success, and deeply concerned about what he considered to be America's misguided attempt to secure its former liberties while remaining a part of the British Empire, he set about writing a pamphlet promoting the idea of American independence, with the close counsel of Benjamin Rush, a young Philadelphia doctor. That pamphlet was *Common Sense*.<sup>7</sup>

*Common Sense* achieved unprecedented circulation. In an era when an average newspaper reached only about 2,000 readers, *Common Sense* sold between 120,000 and 150,000 copies according to Paine's estimates,<sup>8</sup> which are generally accepted by scholars,<sup>9</sup> and went through 25 editions in the single year of 1776, including a German-language translation well received by Pennsylvania's sizable German-speaking community.<sup>10</sup> The second-most-popular pamphlet of the revolutionary era went through only half as many editions.<sup>11</sup> There is every reason to believe that the actual circulation of the pamphlet far exceeded the number of copies sold. In addition to the high probability that many copies had multiple readers, handwritten copies and summaries were circulated, and the pamphlet in its entirety was reprinted in at least one newspaper, digested or excerpted in many more, and read aloud in public.<sup>12</sup> Some scholars estimate that *Common Sense*'s total circulation was as much as 500,000 copies,<sup>13</sup> which means, as Scott Liell calculates, that one of every five inhabitants of America read or heard some form of *Common Sense* in 1776.<sup>14</sup>

George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and other leading lights of the Revolution, as well as a great many citizens of more average standing, have left testaments to the influence of *Common Sense*.<sup>15</sup> These testimonials have been collected and reviewed by many scholars.<sup>16</sup> I will here provide just a few illustrative examples from primary sources.

Benjamin Rush, who was closely connected with the conception and composition of *Common Sense*, proudly recalled the pamphlet in his autobiography: "Its effects were sudden and extensive upon the American mind. It was read by public men, repeated in clubs, spouted in Schools, and in one instance, delivered from the pulpit instead of a sermon by a clergyman in Connecticut."<sup>17</sup>

If one can dismiss Rush as an interested party, the same is not true of Edmund Randolph, a Virginia statesman whose *History of Virginia*, composed circa 1810, vividly recounts the progress of the idea of independence and the role *Common Sense* played in its advance. He wrote that, because of *Common Sense*, "... the public sentiment, which a few weeks before had shuddered at the tremendous obstacles with which independence was environed, overleaped every barrier."<sup>18</sup>

When the Virginia Convention instructed its delegates to the Continental Congress to push for independence, Randolph characterized it as a particular triumph for Paine: "The principles of Paine's pamphlet now stalked in triumph under the sanction of the most extensive, richest, and most commanding colony in America."<sup>19</sup>

In 1802,<sup>20</sup> Samuel Adams, who, like many evangelicals, was alarmed by the radically deistic principles espoused by Paine in *Age of Reason*, wrote to Paine concerning his fears. Even while taking Paine to task for what he perceived to be a "defence of infidelity," Samuel Adams acknowledged that Paine's *Common Sense* had "awakened the public mind, and led the people loudly to call for a declaration of our national independence."<sup>21</sup>

Historians living in the late eighteenth century saw *Common Sense* as being a driving force of the American turn toward independence. William Gordon wrote of *Common Sense*,

The style, manner, and language of the author are singular and captivating. He undertakes to prove the necessity, the advantages, and practicality of independence. That no lurking affection for the sovereign may impede it, kings are placed in a light, that tends not only to destroy all attachment to them, but to make them distasteful: their very office is attempted to be rendered odious; from whence the transition to the royal person is easy. Nothing could have been better timed than this performance. In union with the sentiments and feelings of the people, it has produced most astonishing effects; and been received with vast

applause; read by almost every American; and recommended as a work replete with truth.<sup>22</sup>

In his *History of the American Revolution*, David Ramsay, who himself participated in the war, wrote that because of *Common Sense*, “Many thousands were convinced, and were led to approve and long for a separation from the Mother Country.”<sup>23</sup> Some of Paine’s contemporaries spoke of the effects of *Common Sense* in terms usually reserved for religious conversion experiences. As one citizen of Paine’s Philadelphia wrote of it, “as many as read, so many become converted; though perhaps the hour *before were most violent against the least idea of independence*.”<sup>24</sup>

Modern historians of the American Revolution also generally agree on the tremendous importance of *Common Sense*. Liell goes so far as to say that *Common Sense* was “the single most influential political work in American history, rivaled perhaps only by the *Communist Manifesto* in the history of the world.”<sup>25</sup> Nor is Liell alone in making such a claim. The claim that the influence of *Common Sense* was matched only by that of the *Communist Manifesto* was first made in print in 1937 by Harold Laski,<sup>26</sup> and has been repeated by an historian as prominent as Bernard Bailyn.<sup>27</sup> Paul Johnson called *Common Sense* “the most successful and influential pamphlet ever published,”<sup>28</sup> and Stephen E. Lucas called Paine “one of the Western World’s great revolutionary publicists.”<sup>29</sup> While not all historians are quite so extravagant as Liell,<sup>30</sup> most give Paine a good portion of credit for spurring America toward independence.

### EXPLANATIONS OF THE IMPACT OF *COMMON SENSE*

The credit afforded to Paine for being an important rhetorical leader of the American Revolution naturally invites inquiry into how *Common Sense* produced such a response. Scholars have provided a number of answers to this question. Painting in broad strokes, one can divide the explanations proffered for the success of *Common Sense* between those centered on situational factors beyond Paine’s control, and those “rhetorical factors” inherent in the content and style of the text itself. Needless to say, these modes of explanation are by no means mutually exclusive.

The two most important situational factors in the success of *Common Sense* are the timing of its publication (after the commencement of hostilities and George III’s rejection of peace overtures), and the place of its publication (Philadelphia, communications hub of the colonies). The enormously fortuitous timing of *Common Sense* has often been remarked. Quite by accident, on the very day of the publication of *Common Sense*, the text of a speech given by George III to Parliament on October 25, 1775, was published for the first

time in America, appearing in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* on January 9, 1776.<sup>31</sup> In this speech the king had publicly declared that the colonies were seeking an “independent empire.” After the care the Continental Congress had taken to word every petition and declaration in such a way as to make clear that they were not seeking independence, this was a tremendous blow. *Common Sense*, with its vigorous attack on monarchy, would have seemed to many an especially fitting response to a king who pushed aside every attempt at just reconciliation.<sup>32</sup> In the appendix to the Bradford edition of *Common Sense*, Paine himself noted the seemingly providential nature of this conjunction of events: “Had the spirit of prophecy directed the birth of this production, it could not have brought it forth, at a more seasonable juncture or a more necessary time.”<sup>33</sup>

Aside from the great good luck of being published on the day that George III’s speech became public in America, the year of 1776 was ripe for arguments for independence to be made. Armies had been formed and men were dying in battle. Under such circumstances people were well ready to hear Paine’s most oft-repeated argument, that “Dearly, dearly, do we pay for the repeal of the [intolerable] acts, if that is all we fight for.”<sup>34</sup> As the war commenced, dirty and costly as all wars are, it became increasingly difficult to sustain merely for the dim prospect of America’s taking up its former comfortable place in the Empire. Anyone with “common sense” could see that this was not going to happen, a perception that the king’s speech reinforced. The only alternative that anyone could present to ultimate humiliation and subjugation was independence. Paine’s pamphlet made these points with great vigor, but again, the situation would have favored the success of anyone bold enough to call for independence. As William Gordon wrote, “Nothing could have been better timed than this performance.”<sup>35</sup>

In addition to being published at just the right time, a number of scholars have pointed out that *Common Sense* was also published in just the right place. Liell called *Common Sense*’s place of publication the “greatest external factor” contributing to the pamphlet’s success, pointing out that Philadelphia had the largest population of any city in the colonies, allowing Paine to reach a large audience quickly. It was at the same time the seat of the Continental Congress and a loyalist stronghold, allowing Paine to sample a wide variety of opinion in the composition of *Common Sense*, and to be noticed by the most powerful men in the colonies after publication. Most important, Philadelphia was the primary hub of a publishing industry that used the postal service created by Benjamin Franklin as a distribution system.<sup>36</sup> “Philadelphia had the most highly developed communications network in the colonies” Lucas confirms.<sup>37</sup> The success of *Common Sense* in Philadelphia ensured it a reception in other colonial cities as surely as, in the present day, a national story broken in the *New York Times* will be covered by other papers across the country.<sup>38</sup>

While it is important to acknowledge that these situational factors contributed to the success of *Common Sense*, most scholars today feel that it is both ungenerous and wrong not to acknowledge that Paine's textual craftsmanship also played a role in his pamphlet's success. As John Keane writes, "It is . . . a truism that there was an element of circumstantial luck working in favor of the pamphlet, which appeared in the right place at the right time. . . . Paine . . . not only divined but also *defined* his readers' views, strengthening their beliefs, detonating their prejudices, touching their hearts, changing their minds, convincing them that they must speak out and act."<sup>39</sup>

Even Paine's most ardent critics attribute a good deal to the rhetoric of the text itself. On March 19, 1776, John Adams wrote to his wife with a critical assessment of *Common Sense* that, in typical Adams fashion, is both acerbic and insightful: "You ask, what is thought of Common Sense. Sensible Men think there are some Whims, some Sophisms, some artfull Addresses to superstitious Notions, some keen attempts upon the Passions, in this Pamphlet. But all agree there is a great deal of good sense, delivered in a clear, simple, concise and nervous Style."<sup>40</sup>

Everything that Adams says of *Common Sense* has some foundation in the text, and all of it concerns Paine's rhetoric. From what Adams saw as the faults of Paine's argumentation and use of *pathos*, to the admiring words he spares his style, it is Paine's rhetoric that Adams finds extraordinary, and to which he attributes any success he is willing to concede to the pamphlet.

The first thoroughly modern and scholarly treatment of Paine's rhetoric is Harry Hayden Clark's 1933 essay "Thomas Paine's Theories of Rhetoric."<sup>41</sup> This essay, together with Clark's "Toward a Reinterpretation of Thomas Paine,"<sup>42</sup> appeared in an era when Paine's reputation had not yet recovered from the determined smear campaign launched against him by conservative interests in Britain angered by the radical political propositions of the *Rights of Man*, and abetted by American evangelicals angered by the radically deistic propositions of *The Age of Reason*. Clark, to his credit, is among the first to look at Paine objectively as an historical figure and literary stylist, rather than employing him as either effigy or icon in a polemic campaign.<sup>43</sup> From the whole body of Paine's writing, Clark carefully culled quotes that shed light on Paine's own thoughts on how to craft an effective text. On this basis, Clark proposed that Paine consciously espoused the following seven rhetorical values: (1) "candour, simplicity and clarity," (2) boldness, (3) wit, (4) appeal to both feeling and reason, (5) a balance between "judgment and imagination," (6) an "adjustment between language and ideas with reference to a definite audience," and (7) effective arrangement.<sup>44</sup> Clark's essay remains a useful guide to Paine's own reflections on the nature of his craft, but it is not, and does not intend to be, a close analysis of any portion of Paine's prose.

In the years since Clark's "reinterpretation" of Paine, many other scholars have explored the rhetorical qualities of Paine's writing. For purposes of analysis and review, these approaches to Paine's rhetoric can be divided into those that focused on his style, those that have focused on his ethos, those that have sought psychological reasons for his success, and those that have studied him as an ideologue. I will deal with each of these approaches in turn. It should be noted at the outset that, although all the following approaches to Paine's rhetoric bear on *Common Sense*, not all of them take *Common Sense* as their primary object of analysis. It is also the case that, although all these approaches are arguably rhetorical, not all of the scholars are self-conscious rhetoricians. Finally, I do not propose that each and every essay approaches Paine's rhetoric in only one way. Crossover is quite common. I have arranged the essays on the basis of their strongest themes.

### *Style-Centered Approaches to Paine's Rhetoric*

"How did Paine achieve it?" asks A.J. Ayer about the success of *Common Sense*. "More by rhetoric, of which he was a master, than by force of argument."<sup>45</sup> Ayer is here laboring under the common misconception that rhetoric is entirely a matter of style and has little to do with rational argument. But if this idea does a disservice to rhetoric in general, it does at least accurately reflect the amount of emphasis that has been placed on Paine's style as the aspect of his rhetoric that is most responsible for the success of *Common Sense*.

Paine's contemporaries were quick to attribute his success to his mastery of a literary style that combined the rough poetry of the public house with the righteous zeal and vivid imagery of a preacher, and that set out a grand political vision in familiar words and elegantly simple sentences. In his autobiography, Adams, whose opinion of Paine got lower with every year he lived, asserts of *Common Sense* that "the Phrases, suitable for an Emigrant from New Gate . . . such as 'The Royal Brute of England,' 'The Blood upon his Soul,' and a few others of equal delicacy, had as much Weight with the People as his Arguments."<sup>46</sup>

Jefferson, who remained a friend of Paine's throughout his life, says much the same thing in more flattering terms: "No writer has exceeded Paine in ease and familiarity of style, in perspicuity of expression, happiness of elucidation, and in simple and unassuming language."<sup>47</sup> Benjamin Rush expresses a similar notion of Paine's greatest virtues of style, saying that "His compositions, though full of splendid and original imagery, were always adapted to the common capacities." And William Gordon asserted that "The style, manner, and language of the author are captivating."<sup>48</sup>

Of all the stylistic qualities on which Clark found that Paine himself reflected, none seems to have received a higher valuation than a quality of



simplicity that implied both plainness and efficiency. Halfway through *Common Sense*, Paine declares that he has nothing to offer other than “simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense,”<sup>49</sup> and while an artful simplicity, wit, striking metaphors, and bold emotion are all hallmarks of Paine’s writing, it is an efficient, plain style that Paine values the most. “I dwell not on the vapours of the imagination: I bring reason to your ears, and in language as plain as A, B, C, hold up truth to your eyes,” says he at the end of *American Crisis I*.<sup>50</sup> Opening a polemic against Silas Deane that has a particularly plain style even for Paine, he explains, “As it is my design to make those that can scarcely read understand, [I] shall therefore avoid every literary ornament, and put it in language as plain as the alphabet.”<sup>51</sup>

In the 70 years since Clark culled the above remarks from Paine’s collected work, quite a number of scholars have taken up the question of how Paine’s style contributed to the success of his witting. Not surprisingly, the most frequently noted aspect of Paine’s style is its relative simplicity and resultant clarity. Clark proposed that Paine’s valuation of simple, efficient prose owed something both to his Quaker background, which would have instilled an aversion to any form of stylistic grandiloquence, and his attachment to science, with its insistence on clear logic.<sup>52</sup> It is perhaps not too much of a stretch to propose that Paine wrote in the broader tradition of the Puritan Plain Style.

Taking up the question of what made *Common Sense* the most effective political pamphlet of its day, Elaine K. Ginsberg called attention to the fairly obvious point that the vernacular quality of Paine’s prose allowed for broad identification with the author.<sup>53</sup> Many other studies bear on the “familiarity” of Paine’s style. Lee Sigelman, Colin Martindale, and Dean McKenzie have used computer-driven textual analysis to prove that *Common Sense* does indeed have shorter sentences and more “forceful” language than other pamphlets of the era.<sup>54</sup> Olivia Smith explores the political implications of a commitment to plain and vernacular language with reference to Paine.<sup>55</sup> Jay Fliegelman links Paine’s stylistic commitments to the naturalistic school of the elocutionary movement.<sup>56</sup> And Bruce Woodcock strives to show that, although Paine’s prose may be relatively simple in terms of its vocabulary and grammatical construction, it is nonetheless vibrant and conceptually sophisticated.<sup>57</sup>

Paine’s frequent and overt attempts to stir strong emotion are probably the second most often noted aspect of his style, one that is often credited with contributing to the effectiveness of *Common Sense*. Adams, as we have seen, found Paine’s frequent appeals to pathos to be one of his faults as a writer, and the debate about whether Paine made legitimate or illegitimate emotional appeals has never really ceased. J. Rodney Fulcher sees emotional appeal as the element that sets *Common Sense* apart from the other pamphlet literature of the day, and what ultimately made it effective.<sup>58</sup> Evelyn J. Hinz argues that although

Paine “invokes reason” he does not “persuade through reason,” which is to say that he uses the word “reason” as a mere icon in hot-headed and misguided polemics. Consequently, she argues, “Paine’s style is better labeled as demagogic than democratic.”<sup>59</sup>

Finally, Paine’s penchant for employing elaborate and imagistic metaphors is also frequently noted as another aspect of his style that both set it apart from his contemporaries and perhaps contributed to the success of his writing. Rush singled out Paine’s “splendid and original imagery” for praise as a distinctive element of his style. Woodcock saw Paine’s vivid metaphors as one of the elements of his style that made it sophisticated in spite of the simplicity of his sentences.<sup>60</sup> Edward Larkin makes the case that Paine’s essays on the natural world had metaphoric political content, and his political writings drew on natural imagery.<sup>61</sup> Robert A. Ferguson examines the political usage of the metaphors of childhood and time, for instance “Now is the seed time of continental union.”<sup>62</sup>

### *Ethos-Centered Approaches to Paine’s Rhetoric*

A number of commentators have attributed the success of *Common Sense* to the ethos that Paine is able to project through his prose. Paine’s ethos is in part a product of his style, but it is also a phenomenon in its own right, and has deservedly attracted attention as such.

Clark pointed out that Paine spoke on occasion of the importance of “boldness” or “manliness,”<sup>63</sup> different names for the central quality of republican ethos. This “manliness” was the quality of character that never fears to confront the truth in public, whether that truth be that the time has come for revolution, or that the God of the Bible is a fiction. In *Common Sense*, Paine asks his readers to “put *on*, or rather not put *off*, the true character of a man” in understanding his arguments.<sup>64</sup> This penchant for “manly” or “bold expression” was a quality that Paine’s contemporaries noted in his prose. Adams admitted that he could never have written anything in so “manly and striking a style” as *Common Sense*.<sup>65</sup>

A number of modern scholars have made Paine’s ethos the central object of their rhetorical analyses. Thomas Clark has argued that Paine’s prose “projected an image of a self-reliant, straightforward, and daring individualist” that contrasted quite favorably, in Clark’s view,<sup>66</sup> with the image projected by William Smith, who, as Cato, wrote a number of newspaper letters attacking *Common Sense*. Of Smith, Clark says, “His priggish exactitude, turgid Latinized style, and obsequious dependence on literary and philosophical quotations projected an image of an academic dilettante condescending to instruct the vulgar.”<sup>67</sup> Style and ethos are very much entangled here. The simplicity and familiarity of

Paine's style are read as projecting "manliness." But this style, on Clark's reading, is effective mostly because of the image it projects, rather than in its own right. Clark is not alone in seeing Paine's ethos, projected through his vivid and familiar style, as being an important factor in his success. J. Michael Hogan and Glen Williams argue that it was Paine's "republican charisma" that led to the success of his pamphlet. They link "republican charisma" to a "new rhetoric" of sentiment and emotion emerging in the late eighteenth century.<sup>68</sup> They argue, borrowing heavily on one of the main themes of Jay Fliegelman's *Declaring Independence*, that for Paine this meant exposing one's private self in public without attempting to hide behind affected airs of class or learnedness.<sup>69</sup> Of course it takes great courage to truly appear naked in public, and such performances can have the paradoxical effect of isolating the bold actor from a public not courageous enough to let go of its affectation and pretense. Martin Roth, thinking along these lines, sees Paine playing out a "melodrama of isolation" that is a result of his "manly" rejection of the poisoning comfort of corrupting ties and half-truths, prefiguring the fictitious heroes of Cooper, Melville, Twain, and Faulkner.<sup>70</sup>

There are those, however, who take a somewhat dimmer view of the character evinced in Paine's writings. Edward H. Davidson and William J. Scheick find that "Paine's denial of any craft or art is itself a very artful and crafty enterprise."<sup>71</sup> There is an inherent contradiction in carefully constructing the image of a totally natural and unaffected man. Although the paradoxical nature of his stance does not seem to have stood in the way of the success of *Common Sense*, it perhaps contributed to Paine's ultimate downfall.

### *Psychological Approaches to the Rhetoric of Common Sense*

Winthrop D. Jordan's "Familiar Politics: Thomas Paine and the Killing of the King, 1776" is unique in attempting to explain the success of *Common Sense* in psychological terms. Although Jordan's approach to *Common Sense* is not self-consciously rhetorical, it does certainly explore an important "available means of persuasion"<sup>72</sup> that Paine was able to bring to bear (whether consciously or unconsciously) and remains an inspiring piece. Drawing on the founding patricide described by Freud in *Moses and Monotheism*,<sup>73</sup> Jordan explores how King George is symbolically killed in *Common Sense*. Because the colonists feared that the only thing they held in common was their allegiance to the Crown, both the authority and the totemic function of the Crown needed to be destroyed before the revolution could truly begin. Jordan points out how the very concept of kingship is demolished in *Common Sense* through imagery that has suggestive parallels to the Christian Eucharist. In the Eucharist the dead body of the Father's surrogate is consumed by those sinners symbolically

responsible for his death, providing them with hope and unity. Likewise, Paine describes how the crown symbolizing sovereignty should be “scattered among the people whose right it is,”<sup>74</sup> allowing them to symbolically internalize the unifying sovereignty that they had hitherto conceived of as an external force.<sup>75</sup>

### *Ideological Approaches to the Rhetoric of Common Sense*

Finally, there are a number of scholars who have viewed *Common Sense* primarily as a powerful rearticulation of ideological themes, holding that Paine was able to appropriate such themes to the cause of American independence. Some of the scholars who have written about Paine as an ideologue are more interested in his place in the history of ideas than in accounting for the impact of *Common Sense*, but certainly what they have discovered has much bearing on the question of why *Common Sense* was a rhetorical success.

Bailyn points out that *Common Sense* was distinguished from the writings of more moderate Whigs by its “slashing” attacks on the institution of monarchy and the concept of a balanced constitution.<sup>76</sup> Lucas also sees Paine’s *Common Sense* as being ideologically distinctive in its attack on monarchy.<sup>77</sup> Paine sought a unicameral system of government that was as simple as he endeavored to make his prose, not foreseeing the danger of a “dictatorship of the people.” This shortsighted simplicity might, however, have given him a persuasive advantage over the more realistic, but complex, schemes proposed by Adams and others.

Alfred Owen Aldridge places Paine in the tradition of the “state of nature” and “social contract” thought of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau.<sup>78</sup> He emphasizes how Paine’s primitivism—the belief that people are best when they are furthest from the corrupting influence of “civilization”—allies him most closely with Rousseau. Certainly his primitivist ideology gave Paine a persuasive advantage in appealing to a frontier audience.

Jack Fruchtman Jr. shows how much Paine’s near-deification of Nature owes to the most progressive elements of Protestantism.<sup>79</sup> These beliefs allowed Paine to quote both scripture and the “book of Nature” to appeal to both evangelicals and scientifically minded mechanics.

Eric Foner<sup>80</sup> and Isaac Kramnick<sup>81</sup> both stress the point that Paine’s radicalism was a bourgeois radicalism. Unlike Rousseau, Paine thought that the primary preventable cause of human suffering was bad government, not social inequity. He believed in private property and private enterprise. He saw international trade as a force that was rapidly making wars of conquest obsolete. Such ideas naturally found favor in a nation with a high proportion of small farmers and craftsmen.

*Prejudice and Perceptual Framing: A New Approach to  
the Rhetoric of Common Sense*

The approach I will be taking to *Common Sense* does not stand in contradiction to any of the explanations for the success of the pamphlet reviewed above. Undoubtedly Paine's vivid, efficient style and powerful ethos played significant roles in winning over his audience. Undoubtedly Paine's evangelically flavored, radical bourgeois primitivism was the right ideological cocktail for the situation. And there is no reason to dismiss out of hand Jordan's intriguing ideas about the "subliminal" psychological appeal of the pamphlet's imagery. I merely wish to point out one additional way that *Common Sense* worked on its readers: it deployed the term "prejudice" to foreclose many avenues of resistance to its arguments.

**PREJUDICE AND PERCEPTUAL FRAMING IN *COMMON SENSE***

It will be my contention that in *Common Sense* Paine carefully used the term "prejudice" to frame negative perceptions of American independence, and positive perceptions of the British constitution, as irrational distortions of reality. I will proceed by first discussing the meaning of "prejudice" to Paine, second explaining how "prejudice" could be used as a perceptual frame, and finally examining Paine's deployment of "prejudice" in *Common Sense*.

*What "Prejudice" Meant to Paine*

"Prejudice" is now seen primarily as a character flaw that manifests itself as a fixed bias concerning race, ethnicity, religion, or sex. It is mainly understood as a problem of social psychology and defined in psychological terms. Thus, Gordon W. Allport, in his seminal *The Nature of Prejudice*, says, "*Prejudgments become prejudices only if they are not reversible when exposed to new knowledge.*"<sup>82</sup> But in Paine's time prejudice was something closer to simple prejudgment. It was then understood as being more an intellectual failing than a character flaw, and could be opposed to reason as easily as to justice. Any erroneous preconception might be called a prejudice, whether it be about the true capability of women or the true size of the stars.

Eighteenth-century usages of "prejudice" drew their meaning from two different semantic fields, the legal and the epistemological. The oldest roots of the meaning of "prejudice" are in the legal tradition. Most literally, prejudice is prejudgment, a concept that doesn't necessarily have negative connotations. The classical Latin antecedent of prejudice, *praejudicium*, was a legal term that was the rough equivalent of what we call precedent, a previous judgment.<sup>83</sup> It is,

however, a small step from the idea of basing a decision in part on a previous judgment to notions of premature and unfair judgment, and these negative senses of prejudice were well established in English by the seventeenth century.<sup>84</sup> From the notion of a biased legal judgment, prejudice was generalized to mean, as Samuel Johnson says in his dictionary, any “mischief, detriment, hurt, or injury.”

“Prejudice” gained its epistemological salience in the context of the sustained attack of Baconian science, and later Cartesian and Lockean philosophy, on scholasticism. Besides designating a failure of legal decision procedures, “prejudice” also came to designate a failure of the individual reasoning process.

Francis Bacon’s program of new science is an essential context for the development of the epistemologically grounded meanings of “prejudice.” Baconianism stood, at minimum, for the use of empirical evidence to test hypotheses, and saw itself as opposed to the purely deductive reasoning of scholasticism with its deferential prejudice for the truth of premises from Aristotle, Aquinas, and a handful of other figures. In this context, prejudice could be understood as a cognitive error that stood in the way of scientific inquiry. Although Bacon himself used the term “prejudice” sparingly, those sections of Bacon’s *Novum Organon* that deal with the “Idols” (intended in the sense of “false images”) that afflict the human pursuit of knowledge are a veritable catalogue of intellectual prejudices: “The human understanding is . . . prone to suppose the existence of more order and regularity in the world than it finds” (XLV); “The human understanding when it has once adopted an opinion . . . draws all things else to support and agree with it” (XLVI); “What a man had rather were true he more readily believes” (XLIX).<sup>85</sup> And the list goes on. Thus Bacon’s program of new science, which by the eighteenth century had led to the founding of the Royal Society of London (the most important organization for the promotion of scientific research in eighteenth-century England),<sup>86</sup> provided the framework for new ways to define prejudice and a new reason to expose it: prejudice was a failure of reason that stood in the way of scientific advancement.

Within the general framework of the new science, René Descartes and John Locke explicitly developed the epistemological meaning of prejudice by putting it into the context of faculty psychology. For both, prejudice was a misfiring of the faculty of judgment. Many prejudices are errors of judgment, Descartes explains, caused by reliance on opinions formed in the naiveté of childhood, when the faculty of judgment is not fully developed.<sup>87</sup> Another cause of error is the general cognitive laziness that causes us to rely on preconceived opinion provided by authority or society.<sup>88</sup> Thus Descartes explains prejudice as a failure of individual reason consisting in a reliance on ill-conceived judgments.

In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke explicitly opposes prejudice to reason, and sees it as mainly caused by overreliance on habit and custom. One passage in particular from “The Association of Ideas” develops the epistemological meaning of prejudice in detail. In my citation of the passage below, I have rendered Locke’s usage of “education,” “prejudice,” “custom,” “habit of thinking,” and “reason” in boldface for the sake of a discussion below in which I point out some strikingly parallel language in Paine.

There is scarce any one that does not observe something that seems odd to him, and is in itself really extravagant, in the opinions, reasonings, and actions of other men. The least flaw of this kind, if at all different from his own, is quick-sighted every one enough to espy in another, and will by the authority of reason forwardly condemn; though he be guilty of much greater unreasonableness in his own tenets and conduct. . . . This sort of unreasonableness is usually imputed to **education** and **prejudice**, and for the most part truly enough, though that reaches not the bottom of the disease. . . . **Education** is often rightly assigned for the cause, and **prejudice** is a good general name for the thing itself: but yet, I think, he ought to look a little further, who would trace this sort of madness to the root it springs from.<sup>89</sup>

Locke thus opposes prejudice to individual reasoning and attributes its causation to education, by which he no doubt means what he saw as the flawed scholastic program of education. He goes on to enumerate the psychological roots of the “madness” for which prejudice is “a good general name”:

Some of our ideas have a *natural* correspondence and connexion with one another: it is the office and excellency of our reason to trace these. . . . Besides this, there is another connexion of ideas wholly owing to *chance* or *custom*. . . . This strong combination of ideas, not allied by nature, the mind makes in itself either voluntarily or by chance; and hence it comes in different men to be very different, according to their different inclinations, education, interests, &c. **Custom** settles **habits of thinking** in the understanding.<sup>90</sup>

In the faculty psychology of the day, “judgment” was seen as the faculty that joined ideas together—predicate with noun, cause with effect—to form more complex compound ideas. Ideas could be correctly or incorrectly joined, and a major source of error, as Locke explains, is too much trust in complex ideas that come prejoined or prejudged. In other words, while some ideas have a sound natural connection, like the idea “bird” and the idea “flying,” others, like “stars” and “small,” do not have a connection with any foundation in nature. These unnatural connections between ideas survive only because their rightness is

prejudged and settled in custom and habit. This sense of prejudice as a failure of reason caused by too much deference to custom or indulgence of habit, with roots in both Cartesian and Lockean epistemology and salience in the ongoing project of Baconian scientific advancement, was widespread in the eighteenth century both in English and in French.<sup>91</sup>

Although the sense of prejudice was predominantly negative in the eighteenth century, the term had at least one defender in Edmund Burke, the Irish Tory statesman whose *Reflections on the Revolution in France* Paine attacked in his *Rights of Man*. Where prejudice was assailed as a shortcoming of individual reason in the Lockean liberalism of Paine and Wollstonecraft, the conservative Burke defended it in a most ingenious and compelling way as a manifestation of a collective societal rationality that exceeded the rational powers of the individual.

You see, Sir, that in this enlightened age I am bold enough to confess, that we are generally men of untaught feelings; that instead of casting away all our old prejudices, we cherish them to a considerable degree, and, to take more shame to ourselves, we cherish them because they are prejudices; and the longer they have lasted, and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cherish them. We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason; because we suspect that this stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations, and of ages.<sup>92</sup>

Burke's comments here reinforce the semantic alignment of prejudice with custom and its opposition to individual reason, but offer an opposing perspective on the term. While Burke was not able to prevail against all the negative connotations of "prejudice," he launched a persistent strain of reflection on the subject that survives to this day through the good offices of William Hazlitt, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Richard Weaver, and Russell Kirk.<sup>93</sup> While none of these thinkers attempts to defend the more vicious forms of prejudice, each recognizes the inevitability, and even the advantage, of cultural preconceptions.

Paine's use of "prejudice" would certainly have been conditioned both by the aims of Baconian science and by the epistemological meaning of "prejudice," especially as it was developed by Locke. Paine spent much of his life moving in circles in which the basic tenet of Baconian science—that knowledge needs to be won through observation and experiment rather than study of ancient authorities—had become commonplace. Paine's Quaker roots set him against any tradition that rested on deference to authority, and made him naturally sympathetic to certain aspects of the Baconian assault on scholasticism.<sup>94</sup> As Paine testifies in *The Age of Reason*, he did not study Latin in grammar school,



as was the normal practice, in part because of “the objection the quakers have against the books in which the language is taught.”<sup>95</sup> Paine instead pursued mathematics and science, because, as he says, “The natural bent of my mind was to science.”<sup>96</sup> Eventually Paine would design iron bridges and conduct successful experiments in the production of gunpowder to aid the revolutionary cause.<sup>97</sup>

Paine’s interest in science led him, when in London, to attend lectures conducted by members of the Royal Society. As he recalls in the *Age of Reason*, “[a]s soon as I was able, I purchased a pair of globes, and attended the philosophical lectures of Martin and Ferguson, and became afterwards acquainted with Dr. Bevis, of the Society called the Royal Society.”<sup>98</sup>

Benjamin Martin was an English astronomer, mathematician, and maker of astronomical globes. James Ferguson was a Scottish astronomer and scientific illustrator. Paine first became acquainted with them by attending their public lectures over the winter of 1757–58 while he was living in London off the money he had earned as a hand aboard the British privateer *King of Prussia*. He renewed his acquaintance with Martin and Ferguson in the winter of 1772–73 while in London lobbying on behalf of his fellow excise tax collectors, and added to them that of John Bevis, an astronomer, and Benjamin Franklin, a good friend of Ferguson’s. Through these connections Paine undoubtedly became familiar with the fundamental outlook of Baconian science.<sup>99</sup> To be clear, I am not suggesting that Paine read Bacon. I am rather pointing out the importance of the Baconian tradition as a context for Paine’s view of prejudice, and indeed, given Paine’s self-conception as a man of science, for his thought in general.<sup>100</sup>

Locke’s philosophy had a demonstrable, if not unmediated, effect on Paine’s conception of prejudice. There is almost universal scholarly acknowledgment of deep parallels between Paine and Locke.<sup>101</sup> But any assertion that Paine was directly inspired by the writings of Locke faces a very substantial obstacle: Late in life Paine wrote that he had never so much as held a single volume of Locke in his hand, let alone read him.<sup>102</sup> Given the textual clues to the contrary, it is tempting to suppose that Paine’s memory of his reading had become clouded in his declining years. This is possible. Furthermore, even as a younger man, Paine made statements about his past that were demonstrably false.<sup>103</sup> However, a more categorical denial of influence than Paine’s denial of Locke is rarely found. And Paine need not have read Locke to have absorbed Lockean language and concepts. As Jack Fruchtman put it, “Locke’s ideas virtually saturated the air of Philadelphia in 1776.”<sup>104</sup> One way or another, Paine apparently soaked up the very language that Locke had used to talk about prejudice.

There are two passages in particular from Paine that contain strong verbal and conceptual echoes of Locke’s passage about prejudice from “The

Association of Ideas,” quoted above. The first of these is the very first paragraph of the Bradford edition of *Common Sense* (released about a month after the original, with a new introduction). I have highlighted the same words and phrases found in the quotation from Locke: “custom,” “habit of thought,” and “reason.”

*Perhaps* the sentiments contained in the following pages, are not yet sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favor; a long **habit** of not **thinking** a thing *wrong*, gives it a superficial appearance of being *right*, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defence of **custom**. But tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than **reason**.<sup>105</sup>

The similarity of phraseology demonstrates that Paine had internalized Locke’s key premises with regard to custom, prejudice, and individual reason.<sup>106</sup>

A second passage suggesting Paine’s debt to Locke’s conceptualization of prejudice comes from his *Rights of Man*. This passage is apparently a reply to Burke’s musings about prejudice in *Reflection on the Revolution in France*, and also has a strong odor of Locke.

As to the **prejudices** which men have from **education** and **habit**, in favor of any particular form or system of government, those **prejudices** have yet to stand the test of **reason** and reflection. In fact, such prejudices are nothing. No man is prejudiced in favor of a thing, knowing it to be wrong. He is attached to it on the belief that it is right; and when he sees it is not so, the prejudice will be gone. We have but a defective idea of what prejudice is. It might be said, that until men think for themselves the whole is prejudice, and *not opinion*; for that only is opinion which is the result of reason and reflection. I offer this remark, that Mr. Burke may not confide too much in what have been the customary prejudices of the country.<sup>107</sup>

Several observations are in order. First, the last clause almost certainly marks this as a reply to Burke’s views on prejudice. Second, it seems extraordinarily unlikely that Paine would have put the words “education,” “habit,” and “prejudice” in the same sentence if not for the influence, direct or indirect, of Locke. Finally, Paine unequivocally here describes prejudice as a failure of individual reason, a failure of men to “think for themselves.”

In light of this evidence, it seems that it would be safe to draw two conclusions: (1) Paine, like the intellectuals of his acquaintance, understood “prejudice” as an erroneous preconception, caused by a deference to custom and an indulgence of fixed habits of thought, that stood in opposition to reason; (2) Paine might well have seen his task in *Common Sense* as

being to identify and explode the prejudices standing in the way of American independence.

If Paine's concept of prejudice had roots in Enlightenment conceptions of rationality, his usage tended to expand the meaning of the term in a surprising direction: that of religion. Fruchtman has pointed out a "homiletic" dimension of Paine's rhetoric. Although Paine was a deist who did not believe in scriptural revelation, in *Common Sense* he pandered to the evangelical Protestants of America by using many scriptural references to support his condemnation of monarchy. In addition to the conventional homiletic strategy of evoking scriptural authority, Fruchtman argues that Paine used a homiletic strategy by citing the "book of nature" in a way that paralleled conventional scriptural citation.

The homiletic dimension of *Common Sense* is evident not only in Paine's parallel use of scripture and nature, but also in his use of "prejudice."<sup>108</sup> Paine used "prejudice" in a way that is parallel to the way the Puritan divines used "sin." Sin was not just an action, but a condition that distorts all perception and judgment. As Perry Miller attests, "In the Puritan view of man, the fall had wrought many melancholy effects, but none so terrible as upon his intellect. . . . that instrument was warped and twisted."<sup>109</sup> As the Apostle Paul put it, "Now we see through a glass, darkly."<sup>110</sup> Indeed, Jonathan Edwards, a major theologian of the Great Awakening, named prejudice as a specific consequence of the Fall:

The mind of man is naturally full of prejudices against divine truth. It is full of enmity against the doctrines of the gospel. . . . But when a person has discovered to him the divine excellency of Christian doctrines, this destroys the enmity, removes those prejudices, sanctifies the reason, and causes it to lie open to the force of arguments for their truth.<sup>111</sup>

Edwards's rhetorical strategy has been described as the use of imagery and logic to "strive persistently to undercut the individual's confidence in his or her opinions, values, and especially attitudes"<sup>112</sup> and thus makes it possible for the sinner to see how his or her entire outlook had been distorted by sin. In a parallel and not at all incompatible way, Paine seeks to show his audience how their political perceptions have been distorted with prejudice. Edwards differed from Paine in thinking that reason could only prepare the way for divine inspiration. Paine saw reason as being sufficient to win political conversion in many cases. But Edwards and Paine used "sin" and "prejudice" respectively in a parallel way to frame the entire outlook of resistant members of their audiences, and to suggest to them that their very perceptions had been distorted. What "sin" and "prejudice" have in common in these cases is that they are both

used as “perceptual frames”: frames that structure an audience’s way of seeing the world.

Before moving on to look at how prejudice was used as a perceptual frame in *Common Sense*, it should be noted that Paine himself was not free from what a modern reader would see as prejudice. “Papist” is used regularly as a term of abuse in all Paine’s writings, and, like most people who had been raised in Protestant countries in his time, he was possessed of deeply anti-Catholic presumptions, which he did not hesitate to trade on to advance his cause. We might again recall Locke here: “though he be guilty of much greater unreasonableness in his own tenets and conduct. . . .” But, beyond all condemnation or apology, it should be noted that Paine would have seen Catholics as the ones consumed by ancient prejudices and superstitions, and his own view of them as nothing but a reasonable condemnation of prejudice.

### *“Prejudice” as Frame*

The manner in which the term “prejudice” was used by Paine can be understood by means of the concept of framing, which has been used across a variety of disciplines, including communication, political science, persuasion, social psychology, sociology, anthropology, and marketing.<sup>113</sup> Robert Entman, who has reviewed the usage of “frame” in all these fields, finds that the most generally applicable definition of “to frame” as a term of theory is to use language “to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.”<sup>114</sup>

The roots of framing theory lie in Gregory Bateson’s 1955 “A Theory of Play and Fantasy.” In this essay Bateson seeks to produce a theory of play beginning with the logical analysis of the statement “This is play.” Such a statement, he decides, does not function at the same “level” as other statements in a playful conversation, but rather “frames” the conversation. He observes that “high order” framing statements can change how “lower order” statements and actions are evaluated. For instance, talk that would be considered inappropriate, if not irrational, in “everyday life” is quite normal and rational in a psychotherapy session, and thus psychotherapy itself is a frame. Even the humble “This beef is 75 percent lean” begs the shopper to evaluate the product in a particular way.<sup>115</sup>

All acts of framing bracket a piece of reality in order to promote a particular interpretation of it, but it is possible to define categories of framing. Herbert Simons has begun to do this with a logical typology that usefully clarifies some of the broader categories of framing. Simons identifies two general

categories of frames: *substantive* and *metacommunicative*. Substantive frames bracket an object, like the package of ground beef. Metacommunicative frames bracket an act of communication. Metacommunicative frames can either reflexively bracket the framer's own communication—"Speaking as your friend, not your boss"—or they can bracket someone else's communication—"You are being defensive."<sup>116</sup>

In order to understand Paine's use of prejudice, we need to add a third category of frame to Simons's scheme: perceptual frames. Perceptual frames are frames that bracket not objects, not acts of communication, but rather acts of perception. By "perception" I mean the act of apprehending any physical object or action (like a chair or falling) or any mental object or action (like justice or thinking). A common phrase through which perceptual framing is accomplished is "You are looking at this all wrong." I have briefly explained how "sin" was used as a perceptual frame by Edwards. Sin, like prejudice, was conceived as a condition that distorted perception. Many branches of philosophy, including phenomenology and epistemology, are concerned with constructing perceptual frames, as are many scientific fields, including psychology, neurophysiology, and the study of sensory organs. Perception itself is also framed when someone is told they are under the influence of "false consciousness," brainwashed, possessed, or, more relevant to the work at hand, prejudiced. All frames seek to alter perception, but only perceptual frames do this by bracketing perception itself.<sup>117</sup>

It is my contention that Paine used "prejudice" as a perceptual frame. How is this possible? Consider the following example:

Alas, we have been long led away by ancient **prejudices**, and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great-Britain, without considering, that her motive was *interest not attachment*.<sup>118</sup>

Paine is well aware that many of his readers will come to his text still having a fairly positive assessment of the British constitution and of the motives of the mother country in her dealings with the colonies. Certainly there was much dissatisfaction with specific measures imposed by the British, but as the Olive Branch petition demonstrated, there was also a deep wish to preserve political ties with Britain. In order for Paine's argument for independence to succeed he would have to lead his readers to see not only that it was right to seek independence, but *that they had been wrong all along in their views of the British*. In order to accomplish the difficult task of showing his readers that they had been profoundly and systematically wrong, Paine uses "prejudice" to spur them into epistemological reflection, in other words, to think about the ways in which they have been perceiving the world. This is an act of reflexive framing in that

it moves “up” a level. Just as the statement “This is play” rises above an activity in order to name and evaluate it, so the statement “Alas, we have been long led away by ancient prejudices” rises above a set of perceptions in order to critique and correct them. It challenges readers to “rise above” themselves and see that they have been seeing in a distorted way.

Even if “perceptual framing” is a term from contemporary theory, Paine’s own words on the effects of *Common Sense* do suggest that, if the language was available to him, he would probably agree that he had used “prejudice” as a perceptual frame. In his correction of Abbe Raynal’s prematurely published account of the American Revolution, Paine writes,

Perhaps no two events ever united so intimately and forcibly to combat and expel prejudice, as the revolution of America and the alliance with France. . . . Our style and manner of thinking have undergone a revolution, more extraordinary than the political revolution of the country. We see with other eyes; we hear with other ears; and think with other thoughts, than those we formerly used. **We can look back on our own prejudices, as if they had been the prejudices of other people. We now see and know they were prejudices and nothing else;** and, relieved from their shackles, enjoy a freedom of mind, we felt not before. It was not all the argument, however powerful, nor all the reasoning, however eloquent, that could have produced this change . . . without the two circumstances of the revolution and the alliance.<sup>119</sup>

I include the last sentence for the sake of full disclosure, to show that after the Revolution Paine gave a great deal of credit to the success of the war itself for revealing to people that their views before the war had been prejudiced. But by the same token, he also implies that the objective of “argument” and “reasoning” during the war was to demonstrate to the people that their perception of reality was distorted by prejudice. Presumably he was thinking of *Common Sense* among other works. One could not find a more elegant summation of the goal of perceptual framing than “We can look back on our own prejudices, as if they had been the prejudices of other people.”<sup>120</sup>

### *“Prejudice” in Common Sense*

An analysis of the text of *Common Sense* confirms the semantic alliance of prejudice with habit and custom and its opposition to reason. It also shows the extent to which Paine used “prejudice” to frame perceptions that ran counter to his call for American independence.

From a purely quantitative perspective, the term “prejudice” has a significant presence in *Common Sense*. Paine uses the words “prejudice(s)” or

“prejudiced” 13 times in *Common Sense*, including one usage in the appendix that appeared with the Bradford edition. This number far exceeds the three times “common sense” is used (exclusive of the title). It approaches the 20 times Paine employed “reason(s),” and the 22 times “constitution” is used. And it is a considerable proportion of the number of usages of his two most fundamental concepts, “independence” and “nature.” Paine uses “independent,” “independence,” or “independency” 35 times, and “nature” or “natural” 34 times. Thus “prejudice,” although it doesn’t dominate the pamphlet, does have a noticeable presence.

The role that “prejudice” plays in *Common Sense* becomes more evident when one considers its placement and finds that Paine deploys it systematically before and after many arguments as a kind of buttress. Of the 13 uses of prejudice, 11 are what might be called structural uses. Placed at the beginning and/or end of a major line of argument, Paine’s structural uses of “prejudice” are intended to foreclose the possibility of resistance.

In order to illuminate this strategic use of “prejudice” I will place the passages in which Paine uses “prejudice” in a structural fashion in the context of an outline of *Common Sense*. As is often the case with works of this period, one can get a good sense of the overall structure of *Common Sense* simply by quoting the entire title of the work, as it appeared on the Bradford edition:

COMMON SENSE; ADDRESSED TO THE  
INHABITANTS  
OF

AMERICA,

On the following interesting  
SUBJECTS:

I. Of the Origin and Design of Government in general, with concise Remarks on the English Constitution.

II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.

III. Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs.

IV. Of the present ability of America, with some miscellaneous Reflections.<sup>121</sup>

As billed, the pamphlet begins with a discussion of how government came to be, and its “true design and end,”<sup>122</sup> namely, to ensure the security of the rights and property of the governed. It goes on to argue that the British constitution is unfit to fulfill the true ends of government. Both these lines of argument are enclosed by remarks relating to prejudice.

The very first paragraph of the introduction, which I have cited above, although it doesn’t employ the word “prejudice,” suggests to readers that the perceptions they have of the British government are a product of habit and

custom and might bear reconsideration. Precisely at the conclusion of his argument about the ends of government, Paine adds the following buttressing remark about prejudice:

Here then is the origin and rise of government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of government, viz., freedom and security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with snow, or our ears deceived by sound; however **prejudice** may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding, the simple voice of **nature** and of **reason** will say, it is right.<sup>123</sup>

In effect, Paine is claiming that any disagreement with the premise he has established is a result of prejudice. In this way he attempts to foreclose any possibility of rebuttal by framing the perception that his proposition is not true as prejudiced.

Paine next offers his arguments that the British government is constitutionally unfit to realize the true ends of government that he has just established. Again, exactly at the end of this line of argument, which concludes the first section, he returns to a series of remarks that invoke the concept of prejudice:

The **prejudice** of Englishmen, in favour of their own government by king, lords, and commons, arises as much or more from national pride than **reason**. . . . Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and **prejudice** in favour of modes and forms, the plain truth is, that *it is wholly owing to the constitution of the people, and not to the constitution of the government* that the crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the *constitutional errors* in the English form of government is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered by any obstinate **prejudice**. And as a man, who is attached to a prostitute, is unfitted to choose or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favour of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.<sup>124</sup>

Again, prejudice is opposed to the power of reason. Paine turns the phrase “pride and prejudice” to suggest that any disagreement with his conclusions about the unfitness of the British constitution is a result of prejudice, stemming from national pride. To make his point clear he translates the Lockean epistemological analysis of prejudice into familiar language with a colorful analogy to explain the deleterious effects of a lifetime of attachment to the British constitution on the power of reasoned judgment: it is not reason but “prepossession” that the



rotten English constitution has on its side. The final paragraph cited above serves as a transition to the second section of *Common Sense*, entitled “Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession,” which is a series of proofs that monarchy is an inherently flawed and immoral system of government.

Just as the second section “Of Monarchy” is introduced with an argument that invokes prejudice, so too is the third section, “Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs,” in which Paine urges that the colonies throw off British rule as the only way to escape the corrupting influence of British monarchy.

In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense; and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of **prejudice** and prepossession, and suffer his **reason** and his feelings to determine for themselves; that he will put *on*, or rather that he will not put *off*, the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.<sup>125</sup>

In a pattern now becoming familiar, “prejudice and prepossession” are opposed to reason, and to natural feelings arising from an undistorted view of reality.

The third and fourth sections of *Common Sense* are a mixed bag of arguments on behalf of independence in which the rigid structure of the first two sections becomes somewhat looser, but here too there is at least one use of prejudice to buttress a line of argument against what Paine calls “the doctrine of reconciliation.”

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary offence, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation, may be included within the following description: Interested men, who are not to be trusted; weak men who *cannot* see; **prejudiced** men who *will not* see; and a certain set of moderate men, who think better of the European world than it deserves; and this last class by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this continent than all the other three.<sup>126</sup>

Again, Paine uses prejudice, along with interest and “ill-judged deliberation,” to foreclose on positions that might offer opposition to his argument. Paine uses the same tactic in a passage that comes near the end of the appendix to the Bradford edition:

Should we neglect the present favorable and inviting period, and an independence be hereafter effected by any other means, we must charge the consequence

to ourselves, or to those rather, whose narrow and **prejudiced** souls, are **habitually** opposing the measure, without either inquiring or reflecting.<sup>127</sup>

In both passages, failure to embrace independence and continued attachment to the idea of reconciliation with Britain are framed as the outcome of distorted perceptions.

The three remaining uses of “prejudice” are not designed to foreclose resistance to Paine’s arguments, and so are not what I have termed structural uses. Rather, two point out presuppositions that stand in the way of specific conclusions.<sup>128</sup> A final passage employs prejudice simply as a name for erroneous preconception, grounded in ignorance.<sup>129</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Before *Common Sense* the presumption was that the colonists were British subjects fighting for the restoration of their rights as British subjects. After *Common Sense* the presumption became that the colonists were fighting for the restoration of their natural rights, a goal that could only be achieved through American independence. There are many factors that contributed to the success of *Common Sense*, both external factors such as its timing and place of publication, and internal factors such as its style and ethos. It is important to remember, however, that Paine had not only to show the colonists that it was right to seek independence, but that they had been wrong in their views of monarchy and the British constitution. I have argued that he did this by employing “prejudice” as a perceptual frame. In the eighteenth century “prejudice” signified a failure of individual reason occasioned by unthinking reliance on custom and habit. Eleven of the thirteen times Paine employed “prejudice” in *Common Sense*, he did so at the beginning or end of major lines of argument to suggest that any resistance the reader might offer was rooted not in reason, but in a received view of reality loaded with erroneous preconceptions. Thus, in modern terms, Paine can be said to have used “prejudice” as a perceptual frame in that it is employed to bracket and critique his readers’ perceptions of monarchy, the British constitution, and reconciliation. The result intended by Paine, in his own words, was that his readers be able to see their “own prejudices, as if they had been the prejudices of other people.” This usage of “prejudice” paralleled the manner in which Puritan divines employed “sin” to designate a condition that distorted perception and warped judgment. The testimony of readers suggests that, at least in some cases, a kind of conversion experience was produced by this rhetorical strategy.

Paine was unique in his framing strategy. Paine’s Tory opponents tended to employ a strategy of reframing the motives of Paine himself, rather than the

perceptions of their audience. James Chalmer suggests that Paine is a demagogue and that his democratic vision would soon give way to a "government imposed upon us."<sup>130</sup> Moderate Whigs who wrote on behalf of independence seldom employed any framing strategy, relying instead on straightforward rational argumentation. Certainly Paine's framing strategy is not the only thing that set him apart from other political writers, but it is likely to have added to the penetration of his claims, not only by making resistance more difficult for readers, but also by giving his supporters a ready barrel of tar with which to paint his detractors in public argument.

In this essay I have made a case that *Common Sense* employed the term "prejudice" as a perceptual frame, and that this was one of the factors contributing to its success. In making this case I hope to have also achieved two other ends: (1) Given that it is still commonplace to claim that the impact of *Common Sense* is not fully explained,<sup>131</sup> I hope to have added something to the discussion of why *Common Sense* succeeded, and (2) I hope to have shown that perceptual framing is an important mechanism of rhetorical leadership.

I do wish to add two caveats to the conclusions of this essay about Paine's use of prejudice. The first is a simple recognition of the tendentiousness with which Paine applied "prejudice," especially as opposed to "common sense." Paine categorically labeled every perception that recommended monarchy and opposed independence as "prejudiced," while everything that favored independence was presumably "common sense." But why was the view that America could not hope to defeat the British navy, the best in the world at the time, a product of prejudice,<sup>132</sup> while the notion that an island could not rule a continent, when the vast Roman empire was ruled by a tiny city-state, common sense?<sup>133</sup> I would suggest that, because perceptual frames set themselves above the apparent logic of the experiences they frame, some degree of arbitrariness is inherent in them. The truth of a perceptual frame is difficult or impossible to test from inside, and any test made out of frame can easily be made to seem irrelevant inside of it. The non-falsifiability of perceptual frames is both what makes them powerful and what makes them dangerous.

The second caveat concerns drawing conclusions for contemporary rhetorical leadership from this study of *Common Sense*. It is this: the semantic field has shifted around the term "prejudice" in such a way that it is unlikely that it would achieve the same effects today that it appears to have had for Paine. In Paine's time the understanding of prejudice was such that it was a forgivable and correctable flaw. Today, even though upon reflection we realize with Gadamer that everyone is necessarily prejudiced in the sense of having preconceptions, the term has taken on such a charged meaning that any use of it will sound more like a condemnation than a critique. Therefore, "prejudice"

would no longer probably be the best term for leaders seeking change to use in most circumstances to frame the perceptions of followers.

This said, I do think that lessons for rhetorical leadership can be learned from the general strategy of perceptual framing. Indeed, it is already standard advice that leaders should encourage followers to question assumptions.<sup>134</sup> Mindful of both the power and the danger of perceptual frames, leaders and followers alike can profit by bringing themselves to reflect on how they have been perceiving the world. *Common Sense* is one situated example of a text that led many to do just that.<sup>135</sup>

## NOTES

1. Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, in *The Portable Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York: Viking Press, 1975), 166.
2. The "Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms" can be found in both *Documents of American History I*, 10th ed., ed. Henry Steel Commager and Milton Cantor (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988), 92–95, and *Journals of the Continental Congress*, ed. Paul Leicester Ford (Washington: U.S. Government, 1904–37), 2:128–57. Available online at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwjc.html>.
3. *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 2:158–62.
4. Edmund Cody Burnett, *The Continental Congress* (New York: MacMillan Press, 1941), 26–28; Scott Liell, *46 Pages: Thomas Paine, Common Sense, and the Turning Point to American Independence* (Philadelphia: Running Press, 2003), 70–71. In response to mid-Atlantic fears that the war was becoming a war for independence, on January 24, 1776, the Continental Congress appointed James Wilson, a known opponent of independence, to draft a declaration that would make absolutely clear that the colonies were not in rebellion and were not seeking independence. See Burnett, *The Continental Congress*, 26–28. Opposition to independence was not universal. David McCullough, in *John Adams* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 78, reports that John Adams once said of the Continental Congress that it was "one third Tories, and [one] third timid, and one third true blue." Although this report has been picked up in Liell, *46 Pages*, 99, and in the popular press, a source citation is not given by McCullough or anyone else. However, it does seem a credible estimate. A more detailed reckoning of the allegiances of Philadelphians in general is given by Stephen E. Lucas, *Portents of Revolution: Rhetoric and Revolution in Philadelphia, 1765–76* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976), 161–66.
5. These claims will be substantiated below under the heading "The Historical Context and Impact of *Common Sense*."
6. John Keane's *Tom Paine: A Political Life* (Boston: Little Brown, 1995) is the best scholarly biography of Paine, incorporating much new research, but is usefully supplemented with Jack Fruchtman's *Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1994); David Freeman Hawke's *Paine* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974); and Alfred Owen Aldridge's *Man of Reason: The Life of Thomas Paine* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1959). In addition, Moncure Conway's *The Life of Thomas Paine* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1892/1972), one of the earliest reasonably impartial biographies of Paine, still retains value and is cited by contemporary scholars. The most complete edition of Paine's works remains

Philip S. Foner's generically arranged *Complete Works of Thomas Paine* (New York: Citadel Press, 1945) in two volumes. Conway's chronologically arranged *The Writings of Thomas Paine* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1969), originally published in four volumes between 1902 and 1908, has the majority of the material that Foner does. Harry Hadyn Clark's *Thomas Paine: Representative Selections, with Introduction, Bibliography and Notes* (New York: American Books Company, 1944) remains useful because of its superb introduction and extensive bibliography of earlier writing about Paine. Eric Foner's *Thomas Paine: Collected Writings* (New York: Library of America, 1995) has only Paine's major writings, but has the advantage of portability over Philip Foner's larger edition. The Penguin editions of *Common Sense* and *Rights of Man* are widely available and have good introductions by important scholars, Eric Foner and Isaac Kramnick respectively. There are a number of essential book-length critical studies of Paine in the period of *Common Sense*. Alfred Owen Aldridge's *Thomas Paine's American Ideology* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984) assiduously accounts the complicated publication history of *Common Sense* and has an equally painstaking analysis of the origins and antecedents of many ideas and phrases in *Common Sense*, including chapters on Paine's relationship to Locke, Rousseau, and Montesquieu. It is, in short, superb textual scholarship. Caroline Robbins's essay, "The Lifelong Education of Thomas Paine (1737–1809): Some Reflections Upon His Acquaintance Among Books" (*Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 127 [1983]: 135–42) also provides excellent analysis of the sources of Paine's ideas. Eric Foner's *Thomas Paine and Revolutionary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) places Paine within the social and political context of his day. Jack Fruchtman's *Thomas Paine and the Religion of Nature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993) is an innovative study of Paine's deism and its manifestations. Scott Liell's *46 Pages* is not exactly a scholarly work, but does make a strong and well (if not clearly) documented case for the phenomenal impact of *Common Sense*. Indispensable studies of revolutionary ideology and pamphleteering are Arthur M. Schlesinger's *Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain, 1764–1776* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958); Bernard Bailyn's *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1967/1992); Stephen E. Lucas's *Portents of Revolution: Rhetoric and Revolution in Philadelphia, 1765–76*; and Isaac Kramnick's *Republicanism and Bourgeois Radicalism: Political Ideology in Late Eighteenth-Century England and America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990). Among the best and most recent essays about *Common Sense* are Winthrop D. Jordan's "Familial Politics: Thomas Paine and the Killing of the King, 1776," *Journal of American History* 60 (1973): 294–308; Bruce Woodcock's "Writing the Revolution: Aspects of Thomas Paine's Prose," *Prose Studies* 15 (1992): 171–86; Robert A. Ferguson's "The Commonalities of *Common Sense*," *William and Mary Quarterly* 57 (2000): 465–505; and J. Michael Hogan and Glen Williams's "Republican Charisma and the American Revolution: The Textual Persona of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 86 (2000): 1–18.

7. This brief account of Paine's early life, arrival in America, and composition of *Common Sense* is based on the much fuller treatments that can be found in Hawke, *Paine*, 7–51; Fruchtman, *Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom*, 15–79; Keane, *Tom Paine*, 3–129; and Liell, *46 Pages*, 23–82.
8. The claim of 120,000 was made by Paine in *Forester's Letter II*, dated April 10, 1776 (P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 2:67). By January 14, 1779, Paine's estimate rose to 150,000 in a letter written to Henry Laurens (P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 2:1163).
9. Hawke (*Paine*, 47) simply reports Paine's estimates as do most historians. Eric Foner (*Thomas Paine*, 79) asserts that "most historians" agree with Paine's estimates. Only

Aldridge (*Thomas Paine's American Ideology*, 45) guesses that figure might be a little high, venturing that 100,000 might be closer to the mark.

10. Aldridge (*Thomas Paine's American Ideology*, 40–46) gives a useful account of the publication history of *Common Sense*, but there is no more complete account of *Common Sense's* progress through 25 editions and more than 50 printers than Richard Gimbel's *Thomas Paine: A Bibliographic Check List of Common Sense, With an Account of Its Publication* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1956). Also very useful is Thomas Randolph Adams's *American Independence, the Growth of an Idea: A Bibliographic Study of the American Political Pamphlets Printed Between 1764 and 1776, Dealing with the Dispute Between Great Britain and Her Colonies* (Austin, TX: Jenkins and Reese, 1980), which lists and gives the locations of every extant copy of every edition of every pamphlet published in America relating to American independence between 1674 and 1776.
11. See Adams, *American Independence*, xi. The second leading pamphlet was Jonathan Shipley's "A Speech Intended to have been Spoken on the Bill for Altering the Charters of the Colony of Massachusetts's Bay," according to Thomas Adams.
12. See Schlesinger, *Prelude to Independence*, 253; Aldridge, *Thomas Paine's American Ideology*, 45. Aldridge says that *Common Sense* was reprinted in the February 19, 1776, issue of the *Connecticut Courant*, and Schlesinger cites the *Connecticut Journal*, *Norwich Packet*, and *Virginia Gazette* as papers that reprinted parts of *Common Sense*.
13. Merrill Jensen, *Tracts of the American Revolution, 1763–1776* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967), lxvi–lxvii; Liell, *46 Pages*, 95.
14. Liell, *46 Pages*, 95. By way of comparison, in order to reach one-fifth of the population of the United States in 2006, a work would have to achieve a circulation of approximately 58.5 million, which is about 29 times the daily circulation of America's top newspaper and about the total combined worldwide sales of Michael Jackson's *Thriller* and the Eagles's *Greatest Hits*.
15. See Washington's letter to Joseph Reed, January 31, 1776, in *Washington's Writings*, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931), 4:297. See Franklin's letter to the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, April 15, 1787 (Yale University Papers of Franklin); see John Adams's letter to Abigail Adams, March 19, 1776, in *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774–1789*, ed. Paul H. Smith (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 3:398–99; the *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1962), 3:330–35; and John Adams's letter to Benjamin Waterhouse, October 29, 1805, in *Statesman and Friend: Correspondence of John Adams with Benjamin Waterhouse*, ed. Worthington Chauncey Ford (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1927), 31. John Adams was one of Paine's most vocal American detractors, and tried to take credit for selling the idea of independence to the American people inadvertently through the circumstance of some of his letters advocating independence being captured and published by the British (*Autobiography*, 319). But in 1805 even he wrote, "I do not know whether any man in the world has had more influence on its inhabitants or affairs for the last thirty years than Tom Paine" (Ford, *Statesman and Friend*, 31), although in the wake of the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon, this was not meant at all as a compliment.
16. See Edmund Cody Burnett, *The Continental Congress* (New York: MacMillan Press, 1941), 131–39; Schlesinger, *Prelude to Independence*, 252–55; Hawke, *Paine*, 46–49; Eric Foner, *Thomas Paine*, 79; Lucas, *Portents of Rebellion*, 174; Keane, *Tom Paine*, 111–13 and 123–29; Fruchtmann, *Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom*, 77–78; and Liell, *46 Pages*, 87–138, who devotes the better part of his book to the topic.

17. Benjamin Rush, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Rush: His "Travels Through Life" Together with His Commonplace Book for 1789–1813*, ed. George W. Corner (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1948), 114–15.
18. Edmund Randolph, *History of Virginia*, ed. Arthur H. Shaffer (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1970), 233–34.
19. Randolph, *History of Virginia*, 251.
20. Paine returned to America with the blessings of his friend Thomas Jefferson, the country's new president, in 1802.
21. In Eric Foner, *Thomas Paine*, 415.
22. William Gordon, *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1788/1969), 2:275.
23. David Ramsay, *The History of the American Revolution*, ed. Lester H. Cohen (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Classics, 1789/1990), 1:315–16.
24. Quoted in Hawke (*Paine*, 47), who in turn quotes it from Margaret Wheeler Willard, ed., *Letters on the American Revolution* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1925), 274–75.
25. Liell, 46 Pages, 16.
26. See Clark, *Paine*, cxi.
27. Bailyn, *Ideological Origins*, 286.
28. Paul Johnson, *A History of the American People* (New York: Harper Collins, 1998), 154.
29. Lucas, *Portents of Rebellion*, 160.
30. Lucas, for instance, gives a very sober account of the impact of *Common Sense*, stating that it "did not convert a majority of Philadelphians to the cause of independence (nor did any other individual piece of rhetoric). It no doubt crystallized the opinions of some residents who had been leaning toward separation, and it surely convinced a fair number of previously undecided citizens that independence was worthy and expedient. Its great immediate accomplishment, however, was to guarantee a public hearing for the Radicals. 'Independence' lost much of its pejorative meaning. . . . Moreover, its case for separation was so well conceived, so soundly structured, so engagingly written that it likely created a public presumption in favor of independence" (*Portents of Rebellion*, 175).
31. The full text of this can be found in Clarence S. Brigham, ed., *British Royal Proclamations Relating to America, 1603–1783* (New York: B. Franklin, 1968), 224–29.
32. Liell, 46 Pages, 84–85.
33. So as to make references to Paine's work accessible to the widest possible audience, wherever possible I will give citations for the Penguin editions of *Common Sense* and *Rights of Man* (designated Penguin), and for Philip Foner's *The Complete Writings of Thomas Paine*. Penguin, 113; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:40.
34. Penguin, 91; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:24.
35. William Gordon, *History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America* (London, 1788), 2:275.
36. Liell, 46 Pages, 85–86.
37. Lucas, *Portents of Rebellion*, 4.
38. Lucas (3–23) and P. Foner (19–69) both provide excellent portraits of Philadelphia at the Revolution.
39. Keane, *Tom Paine*, 113.

40. John Adams's letter to Abigail Adams, March 19, 1776, can be found in Smith, *Letters of Delegates to Congress*, 3:398–99, and the *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1962), 3:330–35.
41. Harry Hayden Clark, "Thomas Paine's Theories of Rhetoric," *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of the Sciences, Arts and Letters* 28 (1933): 307–39.
42. Harry Hayden Clark, "Toward a Reinterpretation of Thomas Paine," *American Literature* 5 (1933): 133–45.
43. Moncure Conway's biography of Paine (1883) doesn't go quite as far to defend Paine as Francis Oldys's (a.k.a. Richard Chalmers) (1791) and James Cheetham's (1809) biographies do to defame him. The enduring effects of the campaign to defame Paine are witnessed by the fact that Theodore Roosevelt was reportedly happy to dismiss Paine as a "dirty little atheist" a century after Paine's death. Although this quote about Paine is frequently attributed to Roosevelt, I have thus far been unable to discover its source.
44. These elements are summarized on page 144 of Clark's "Toward a Reinterpretation" and spelled out at greater length in Clark's "Thomas Paine's Theories of Rhetoric."
45. Alfred Jules Ayer, *Thomas Paine* (New York: Atheneum, 1988), 36.
46. Adams, *Diary and Autobiography*, 3:333.
47. Merrill D. Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson: Writings* (New York: Viking Press, 1984), 1451.
48. Rush, *Autobiography*, 323; Gordon, *History of the Rise*, 275.
49. Penguin, 81; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:17.
50. P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 2:56.
51. P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 2:111.
52. Clark, "Thomas Paine's Theories of Rhetoric," 309.
53. Elaine K. Ginsberg, "Style and Identification in *Common Sense*," *Philological Papers* 23 (1977): 26–36.
54. Lee Singelman, Colin Martindale, and Dean McKenzie, "The Common Style of *Common Sense*," *Computers and the Humanities* 30 (1997): 373–79.
55. Olivia Smith, *The Politics of Language, 1791–1819* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1984).
56. Jay Fliegelman, *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language and the Culture of Performance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 42–49.
57. Woodcock, "Writing the Revolution."
58. J. Rodney Fulcher, "Common Sense vs. Plain Truth: Political Propaganda and Civil Society," *Southern Quarterly* 15 (1976): 57–74.
59. Evelyn J. Hinz, "The 'Reasonable' Style of Tom Paine," *Queens Quarterly* 79 (1972): 231–41. The passages quoted are from page 240.
60. Woodcock, "Writing the Revolution."
61. Edward Larkin, "Inventing an American Public: Thomas Paine, the Pennsylvania Magazine, and American Revolutionary Political Discourse," *Early American Literature* 33 (1998): 250–77.
62. Ferguson, "Commonalities." For quote, see Penguin, 82; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:17.
63. The topic of Paine's use of "man," a term that is set in opposition to animality on the one hand, and childishness and femininity on the other, and its relationship to both civic republican rhetoric of virtue and classically liberal natural rights theory, cannot be fully treated



within the framework of this essay. I use the term here as Paine's contemporaries would have used it, to signify a certain quality of character that in our day we know that women as well as men possess, but at that time was mostly believed to be inherent in males of the human species.

64. Penguin, 82; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:17.
65. John Adams to Abigail Adams, March 19, 1776, in Smith, *Letters of Delegates to Congress*.
66. Thomas Clark, "Rhetorical Image-Making: A Case Study of the Thomas Paine–William Smith Propaganda Debates," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 40 (1975): 261. It should be noted that Clark's essay, insightful in some respects, is seriously marred by misuse and misunderstanding of Edwin Black's concept of second personae.
67. Clark, "Rhetorical Image-Making," 259. Clark may be going a bit too far in his condemnation here, applying twentieth-century stylistic norms to eighteenth-century prose, but I believe his point is essentially correct.
68. Hogan and Williams, "Republican Charisma."
69. Hogan and Williams, "Republican Charisma," 13, 15; Fliegelman, *Declaring Independence*, 24, 32–33.
70. Martin Roth, "Tom Paine and American Loneliness," *Early American Literature* 22 (1987): 175–82.
71. Edward H. Davidson and William J. Scheick, "Authority in Paine's *Common Sense* and the *Crisis Papers*," *Studies in the Humanities* 18 (1991): 130.
72. I am here of course alluding to Aristotle's definition of rhetoric at 1355b26.
73. Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1939), 102–6. This is section 1.4 for those with different editions.
74. Penguin, 98; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:29.
75. J. Vernon Jenson further explores the role of the "family metaphor" in revolutionary rhetoric, but without specific reference to either Paine or Jordan. "British Voices on the Eve of the American Revolution: Trapped by the Family Metaphor," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 63 (1977): 43–50. Lucas notes "how adroitly Paine tailored his pamphlet to the psychological demands of centrist Philadelphians" by acknowledging how "strange and difficult" the proposed steps must seem. *Portents of Rebellion*, 173–74.
76. Bailyn, *Ideological Origins*, 285–90.
77. Lucas, *Portents of Rebellion*, 168–72.
78. Aldridge, *Thomas Paine's American Ideology*.
79. Fruchtmann, *Thomas Paine and the Religion of Nature*.
80. Eric Foner, *Thomas Paine and Revolutionary America*.
81. Kramnick, *Republicanism and Bourgeois Radicalism*.
82. Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1954), 9. In the field of social psychology, Elisabeth Young-Bruehl's *The Anatomy of Prejudices* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996) thoughtfully questions and updates Allport's theories of prejudice. Michael Billig's *Arguing and Thinking* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 216–22, brings social psychological perspectives on prejudice into contact with the rhetorical tradition.
83. See the entry for "prejudice" in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

84. Thomas Hobbes's usage of "prejudice" in *Leviathan* frequently occurs in legal contexts to designate unfair prejudgments. For instance, in part 2, chapter 26 of *Leviathan*, he explicitly contrasts valid presumption with invalid prejudice: "For all judges . . . if they refuse to hear proof, refuse to do justice . . . [then] their presumption is but prejudice, which no man ought to bring with him to the seat of justice." See Hobbes, *Leviathan Parts One and Two*, ed. Herbert W. Schneider (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), 221. In quoting Hobbes, I have cited part and chapter as well as the page number in the Schneider edition for the benefit of those who cannot obtain this edition. Also see Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 2:24 (199), 2:26 (212), and 2:30 (273).
85. Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*, in *The Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis, and Douglas Denon Heath (New York: Garrett Press, 1620/1968), 4:39–248. The numerals refer to aphorism numbers in the *Novum Organum*.
86. Antonio Perez-Ramos, *Francis Bacon's Idea of Science and the Maker's Knowledge Tradition* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1988), 14. In addition to Perez-Ramos's account of the complex history of the Baconian movement and its modern interpretations, also see the useful introduction to Bacon provided by Markku Peltonen's introduction in *The Cambridge Companion to Bacon*, ed. Markku Peltonen (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1–24; the summary assessment of scholarship by Brian Vickers, "Francis Bacon and the Progress of Knowledge," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 53 (1992): 495–518; and explorations of Bacon's influence on rhetorical theory by Vickers in "Bacon and Rhetoric," in Peltonen, *The Cambridge Companion to Bacon*, 200–231.
87. In his *Principles of Philosophy*, Descartes invokes prejudice in the title of part 1, section 71, explaining how the understanding comes to make errors of judgment: "*Praecipuam errorum causam a praepudiciis inantiae procedere*" (The chief cause of error arises from the prejudices of childhood). I am quoting from Charles Adam and Paul Tannery's edition of Descartes works, *Oeuvres de Descartes, VIII* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1973), 35. An English translation of the passage can be found on page 218 of John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch's *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
88. Descartes, *Principles of Philosophy*, sec. 73.
89. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Alexander Campbell Fraser (New York: Dover, 1690/1959), 1:527–28.
90. Locke, *Essay*, 529.
91. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, for instance, cautioned against letting prejudices become part of education in his *Emile*: "Reason and judgment come slowly; prejudices come in crowds; it is from them he must be preserved." See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile: Or, On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 171. Mary Wollstonecraft opens her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* with the following line: "In the present state of society it appears necessary to go back to first principles in search of the most simple truths, and to dispute with some prevailing prejudice every inch of ground." See Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. Miriam Brody (New York: Penguin Books, 1792/1975), 91.
92. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Conor Cruise O'Brien (New York: Penguin, 1790/1968), 183.
93. William Hazlitt (1778–1830), the English essayist, has left two elegant pieces on prejudice, both of which can be found in vol. 20 of the *Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. P. P. Howe (New York: AMS Press, 1967), 316–21 and 324–30. In these essays he works his way

to the position that inasmuch as prejudice is an “involuntary and stubborn association of ideas” it is well nigh unavoidable, and not necessarily erroneous. Hans-Georg Gadamer, the German philosopher of hermeneutics who came to prominence in the late twentieth century, makes the point, in *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), 235–58, that prejudices are necessary conditions for understanding inasmuch as some presuppositions are necessary to even begin questioning presuppositions. Inasmuch as prejudices define a “horizon” of rational knowledge, it is one of the tasks of hermeneutics to discover the prejudices that define the conditions under which a text is produced and is intelligible. Richard Weaver attempted to associate the increasing frequency and sharpness of the charge of “prejudice” in his own day with the rise of international communism in his essay “Life Without Prejudice,” in *Life Without Prejudice, and Other Essays* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1965). My work here on Paine’s use of “prejudice” suggests that the term was “weaponized” within the liberal tradition long before the conception of communism. But Weaver is at least correct in his longer view of the history of the term. Russell Kirk, a respected conservative intellectual, chose the “prejudice” passage as one of six from *Reflections on the Revolution in France* for inclusion in his *Portable Conservative Reader* (New York: Viking Press, 1982), 25–35. Also see his treatment of Burke on prejudice in *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Eliot* (Chicago: Regnery Books, 1986), 33–36.

94. For a balanced assessment of the continuing influence of Quakerism on Paine’s writing see Robbins, “Lifelong Education,” 139–40.
95. P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:496.
96. P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:496.
97. On the gunpowder experiments, see Hawke, *Paine*, 35. On Paine’s attempted career as a bridge designer, see Keane, *Tom Paine*, 267–71. Also see “The Construction of Iron Bridges” in P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 2:1051–57.
98. P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:496.
99. On Paine’s relation to Ferguson, Martin, Bevis, and the Royal Society, see Keane, *Tom Paine*, 40–45, and Robbins, “Lifelong Education,” 136.
100. One passage in which Paine discusses prejudice has a strong resonance with Bacon’s well-known comparison of scholastic logicians to spiders in the *Advancement of Learning* (I,3,b). The gist of this simile is that pure deductive reasoning, such as the scholastics practice, has formal beauty, like a spider’s web, but, also like a spider’s web, signifies nothing about nature beyond itself. The work of the scholastic spiders stands in contrast with the work of the true scientist, that reveals nature rather than existing as a world-in-itself. Thus the “cobwebs of learning” were associated with the dark scholastic past. On the antecedents and influence of this passage, see R. H. Bowers, “Bacon’s Spider Simile,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 17 (1956): 133–35.

In this connection it is interesting, and quite fitting, that Paine should compare prejudices to cobwebs at length: “There is something inexpressibly curious in the constitution and operation of prejudice. It has the singular ability of accommodating itself to all the possible varieties of the human mind. Some passions and vices are but thinly scattered among mankind, and find only here and there a fitness of reception. But prejudice, like the spider, makes every place its home. It has neither taste nor choice of situation, and all it requires is room. Every where, except in fire and water, a spider will live. So, let the mind be as naked as the walls of an empty and forsaken tenement, gloomy as a dungeon, or ornamented with the richest abilities of thinking, let it be hot, cold, dark or light, lonely or inhabited, still prejudice, if undisturbed, will fill it with cobwebs, and live, like the spider, where there seems

nothing to live on. If the one prepares her food by poisoning it to her palate and her use, the other does the same. . . . prejudice may be denominated the spider of the mind" (P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 2:242).

Again, one cannot know if Paine had heard or read Bacon's spider simile. But one can point out that his use of the spider as a symbol of prejudice would make good sense to those who had. As scholastic webs of logic floating in the air are nothing but arbitrarily formed extrusions of the human mind, so too with prejudice. Both obscure the true nature of things.

101. Fruchtman, *Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom*, 64–70; Ferguson, "Commonalities of Common Sense," 474–76; and an especially detailed treatment in Aldridge, *Thomas Paine's American Ideology*, 107–36.
102. Paine to James Cheetham, August 21, 1807, quoted in Fruchtman, "Nature and Revolution in Paine's *Common Sense*," *History of Political Thought* 10 (1989): 427 n.28; Ferguson, "The Commonalities of *Common Sense*," 474–75. This letter is not collected in P. Foner.
103. For instance, he claimed that he never published anything before coming to America. In fact he had published his *The Case of the Officers of Excise* in 1772. For a list of citations of Paine's repeated assertions that he was not an author prior to reaching America, see Aldridge, *Thomas Paine's American Ideology*, 27.
104. Fruchtman, *Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom*, 65.
105. Penguin, 63; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:3.
106. A peculiarity of this passage that is worth noting is how in it Paine evinces an uncharacteristic skepticism about the power of reason. This skepticism might be the result of some exposure to Hume's idea that all reason is the product of habitual association, or it might be a simple reflection on the effects his pamphlet produced: first shock, but then increasing assent as time rendered it less unusual to think of an independent America.
107. Penguin, 157–58; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:352–53.
108. Fruchtman, *Thomas Paine and the Religion of Nature*, 1–15.
109. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1952), 111.
110. This conception of sin, synonymous with the condition of fallenness, has deep roots in Christian theology. Perry Miller points out the affinity of Puritan theology with Saint Augustine's conception of sin and regeneration (*Seventeenth Century*, 21–34). And of course a great source of this tradition is Paul's condemnation of the vanity of knowledge in First Corinthians, chapter 13: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. *For now we see through a glass, darkly . . .*"
111. From the sermon "A Divine and Supernatural Light," in Stephen R. Yarbrough and John C. Adams, *Delightful Conviction: Jonathan Edwards and the Rhetoric of Conversion* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), 114.
112. Yarbrough and Adams, *Jonathan Edwards*, 87.
113. In rhetoric and communication, frame analysis has been used primarily in the study of mass media. An early exception to this rule was the use of framing by Paul Watzlawick, Janet B. Beavin, and Don D. Jackson to develop the concept of metacommunication in *Pragmatics of Human Communication* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1967). But more typical of recent times are Brian L. Ott and Eric Aoki, "The Politics of Negotiating Public Tragedy: Media Framing of the Matthew Shepherd Murder," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 5 (2002): 483–505; Herbert W. Simons, "'Going Meta': Definition and Political Applications," *Quarterly Journal*

of *Speech* 80 (1994): 468–81; Zhongdag Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki, “Framing Analysis: An Approach to News Discourse,” *Political Communication* 10 (1993): 55–76; Robert M. Entman, “Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm,” *Journal of Communication* 43 (1993): 51–58; and Shanto Iyengar, *Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). However, David Hoffman suggests that the strategy of framing is as old as the Greek sophists in “Reversing Perceptions of Probability Through Self-Referential Argument: Interpretation and Analysis of Protagoras’ Stronger/Weaker Fragment,” in *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Argumentation*, ed. Frans H. van Eemeren, J. Anthony Blair, Charles A. Willard, and A. Francisca Snoeck Henkemans (Amsterdam: Sic Sac, 2003), 503–7. The recent communication literature on framing blends almost imperceptibly into political communication and political science: see, for instance: Murray J. Edelman, “Contestable Categories of Public Opinion,” *Political Communication* 10 (1993): 231–42; and Robert M. Entman and A. Rojecki, “Freezing Out the Public: Elite and Media Framing of the U.S. Anti-Nuclear Movement,” *Political Communication* 10 (1993): 151–67. The journal *Political Communication*, in fact, has run 30 articles that touch on framing since it started indexing in 1994. Herbert W. Simons discusses framing in the context of persuasion in “Framing and Reframing” in *Persuasion in Society* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001), 115–33. Foundational work in frame theory was done in the field of anthropology by Gregory Bateson, “A Theory of Play and Fantasy,” in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972), 177–93; and in sociology by Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974). The paradigm has also received attention in social psychology. See Beth E. Meyerowitz and Shelly Chaiken, “The Effects of Message Framing on Breast Self-Examination Attitudes, Intentions, and Behavior,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 52 (1987): 500–510; and Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, “Choices, Values, and Frames,” *American Psychologist* 39 (1984): 341–50. In marketing, see Irwin P. Levin and Gary J. Gaeth, “How Consumers Are Affected by the Frame of Attribute Information Before and After Consuming the Product,” *Journal of Consumer Research* 15 (1988): 374–78.

114. Entman, “Framing,” 52.
115. Bateson’s theory of psychological frames inspired Erving Goffman’s *Frame Analysis* (1974), the concept of metacommunication formulated by Watzlawick et al. (1967), the recognition of the argumentative tactic that Herbert Simons called “going meta” (1994), and the widely disseminated general concept of framing already surveyed. All authors mentioned are cited above in note 76.
116. Simons, “Framing and Reframing,” 131.
117. The strategy of perceptual framing is not by any means new. It is at least as old as Plato’s myth of the cave, in which Socrates compares common perceptual reality with shadows on the wall of a cave. The shadows are taken to be the things of which they are shadows by prisoners chained inside that cave, and only one who has known the world outside the cave sees that they are shadows (*Republic*, book 7, 514–18). Perceptual framing has even been theorized under other names. Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca speak of essentially the same strategy in their discussion of the “appearance-reality” pair in *The New Rhetoric*. See Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Nortre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 415–19. In this case “appearance” is used to frame perception and differentiate it from “reality,” just as Plato asks us to conceive of ordinary

perception as the shadows on the wall of a cave to differentiate it from “reality,” or as Paine asks his readers to conceive of their perceptions as having been distorted by prejudice in order to differentiate them from “reality.”

118. Penguin, 83–4; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:18.
119. P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:242–43.
120. Again, the parallel to the words of Paul, which would have been well known to American evangelicals, is striking: “For now we see through a glass darkly . . . but then I shall know even as I am known” (I Cor. 13:12). What is looking back on one’s own prejudices as if “they had been the prejudices of other people” if it is not knowing oneself as one is known? P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 2:143.
121. Penguin, 61.
122. Penguin, 65; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:5.
123. Penguin, 68; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:6.
124. Penguin, 71; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:8–9.
125. Penguin, 81–82; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:17.
126. Penguin, 88; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:21–22.
127. Penguin, 120; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:45–46.
128. First passage, already cited: Penguin, 84; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:18. Second passage: Penguin, 105; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:34–35.
129. Penguin, 85; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:19.
130. James Chalmers, *Plain Truth*, in *Tracts of the American Revolution, 1763–1776*, ed. Merrill Jensen (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1966), 486.
131. Thomas Clark claimed that “Critics have long puzzled over the unexampled popular success of Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*” in “Rhetorical Image-Making: A Case Study of the Paine–William Smith Propaganda Debates,” *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 40 (1975): 248. Jack Greene says, “The full significance of the achievement of Thomas Paine has perhaps never been thoroughly explained,” in “Paine, America, and the ‘Modernization’ of Political Consciousness,” *Political Science Quarterly* 93 (1978): 73. Fruchtman says, “No one has ever satisfactorily explained Paine’s achievement,” in *Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom*, 62. Ferguson contended in “Commonalities of Common Sense” that scholars have rarely looked at the connection between the popularity and impact of *Common Sense* on the one hand, and its rhetoric on the other.
132. Penguin, 105; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:34–35.
133. Penguin, 91; P. Foner, *Complete Writings*, 1:24.
134. See, for example, Robert Kriegel and David Brandt, *Sacred Cows Make the Best Burgers: Paradigm-Busting Strategies for Developing Change-Ready People and Organizations* (New York: Warner Books, 1996).
135. For an authoritative case for the relevance of historical examples for contemporary decision makers, see Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers* (New York: Free Press, 1986).

Copyright of *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* is the property of Michigan State University Press and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.

Copyright of *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* is the property of Michigan State University Press and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.